

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARAE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 AID-05 PC-01 IGA-02 OMB-01 TRSE-00
EB-07 COME-00 CU-02 /074 W
-----031431Z 054314 /44

P R 031330Z JUN 77
FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1999
INFO AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMCONSUL SAO PAULO

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EO 11652 NA
TAGS PGOV PINS BR
SUBJECT: FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS ENTERING BRAZIL TO UNDERGO PRIOR
CENSORSHIP; INTELLECTUALS PETITION FOR RETURN TO DEMOCRATIC
LIBERTIES

REFS: (A) BRASILIA A-21 (B) BRASILIA 4205 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY: THE GOB JUSTICE MINISTRY ANNOUNCED MAY 27 THAT ALL
FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS ENTERING BRAZIL WOULD HENCEFORTH BE SUBJECT
TO PRIOR CENSORSHIP IN ORDER TO BAN "MATERIAL COUNTER TO MORALITY
AND ACCEPTED CUSTOMS." THE RESPONSE TO THE ANNOUNCEMENT FROM
NEWSPAPERS, INTELLECTUALS AND OPPOSITION PARLIAMENTARIANS WAS
NEGATIVE. A GROUP OF OVE 800 PROMINENT UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS
AND INTELLECTUALS FROM RIO DE JANEIRO PUBLISHED A MANIFESTO IN SUPPOR
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OF AN EARLIER MANIFESTO ISSUED BY A SIMILARLY-COMPOSED GROUP IN
SAO PAULO CALLING FOR THERESTORATION OF DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES IN
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BRAZIL. END SUMMARY.

2. JUSTICE MINISTER ARMANDO FALCAO ISSUED A DECREE ON MAY 27
REQUIRING THAT ALL FOREIGN NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES AND BOOKS ENTERING
BRAZIL BE SUBJECTED TO CENSORSHIP PRIOR TO BEING PLACED ON SALE.
THE CENSORS WILL BE MEMBERS OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CENSORSHIP AND
PUBLIC DIVERSIONS OF THE FEDERAL POLICE, THE ORGAN ALREADY RES-

PONSIBLE FOR THE PRE-AND POST-PUBLICATION CENSORSHIP OF BRAZILIAN MEDIA, WHO WILL BE STATIONED AT ALL EIGHT BRAZILIAN POST OFFICES WHICH RECEIVE AND PROCESS INCOMING INTERNATIONAL MAIL. ARTICLES OR PUBLICATIONS FOUND OFFENSIVE TO "MORALITY AND GOOD CUSTOMS" WILL BE FORWARDED TO THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE, WHICH WILL MAKE THE ULTIMATE DECISION ON THEIR PUBLICATION OR SUPPRESSION. MINISTER FALCAO, WHO BASED THE DECREE ON THE AUTHORITY GRANTED HIM BY DECREE LAW NO. 1077 TO PREVENT THE PUBLICATION OR SALE OF MATERIALS COUNTER TO "MORALITY AND ACCEPTED CUSTOMS," CLAIMED THE REGULATION WOULD HARM ONLY "SUBVERSIVE OR OBSCENE AUTHORS."

3. SEVERAL MAJOR FOREIGN BOOKSTORE OPERATORS IN RIO AND PORTO ALEGRE SAID THAT THE PRIOR CENSORSHIP OF FOREIGN MATERIAL HAD IN FACT BEEN IN EFFECT FOR SOME TIME, THE MAY 27 DECREE MERELY FORMALIZING AN ESTABLISHED CUSTOM. ACCORDING TO THE BOOKSELLERS, THE AUTHORITIES IN THE PAST WOULD SIMPLY DELAY RELEASING OFFENDING PUBLICATIONS FROM CUSTOMS FOR MONTHS, OFTEN ON THE BASIS OF IRREGULAR CRITERIA FOR CENSORSHIP. COMPLAINTS WERE HEARD FROM INTELLECTUALS THAT THE GOVERNMENT WAS TRYING TO ISOLATE THEM FROM CURRENT INTERNATIONAL THOUGHT, AND ONE MDB FEDERAL DEPUTY REMARKED THAT "BRAZIL IS AN ISLAND IN ALL SENSES EXCEPT THE GEOGRAPHIC." IN LATE JANUARY, OVER 1000 INTELLECTUALS SIGNED AND PUBLISHED A MANIFESTO CALLING FOR THE ABOLITION OF PRIOR CENSORSHIP IN BRAZIL (REF A).

4. THE RESPECTED DAILY O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO CARRIED A SCATHING EDITORIAL ON THE NEW REGULATION, SAYING THAT BY MEANS OF SUCH A SIMPLE DECREE THE JUSTICE MINISTER HAD "CONFERRED MORE POWER ON THE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FEDERAL POLICE THAN THE INQUISITION EVER ALLOWED ITSELF." THE PAPER BITTERLY AND SARCASTICALLY QUESTIONED THE COMPETENCE OF FEDERAL POLICE TO CENSOR ARTICLES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGES AND ON SUCH TOPICS AS MEDICINE AND PHILOSOPHY. THE EDITORIAL WENT ON TO NOTE THAT THE BRAZILIAN CONSTITUTION GUARANTEES "FREEDOM OF THOUGHT, POLITICAL BELIEFS AND PHILOSOPHY AS WELL AS FREEDOM OF INFORMATION, INDEPENDENT OF CENSORSHIP." O ESTADO FINISHED BY CALLING THE DECREE A "NEW BARRIER TO THOUGHT AND CULTURE" AND "ANOTHER PUBLIC DOCUMENT TO FILL THE REPORTS CIRCULATING IN THE OUTSIDE WORLD ABOUT DISRESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN BRAZIL."

5. ON THE SAME DAY AS THE DECREE WAS PROMULGATED, A MANIFESTO SIGNED BY OVER 800 DISTINGUISHED INTELLECTUALS AND UNIVERSITY PROFESSORS FROM RIO DE JANEIRO WAS PUBLISHED ANNOUNCING THE SIGNERS SUPPORT FOR AN EARLIER MANIFESTO PUBLISHED BY OVER 600 SAO PAULO PROFESSORS (REF B). A SPOKESMAN FOR THE RIO GROUP SAID THAT THEY WISHED TO EXPRESS THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE SAO PAULO GROUP'S CALL FOR A RETURN TO "DEMOCRATIC LIBERTIES" AND THAT THE TWO PETITIONS STAND AS DOCUMENTS OF THE BRAZILIAN INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY'

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CONSCIENCE, " A CRY OF ALERT FROM THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN INTELLIGENCE
AND LIBERTY."

6. COMMENT : A FURTHER STEP IN THE RECENT HARDENING OF THE
REGIME, THE INSTITUTION OF PRIOR CENSORSHIP ON FOREIGN MATERIALS
COULD HARDLY COME AT A LESS OPPORTUNE TIME. INTELLECTUALS,
ESPECIALLY PROFESSORS, ARE ALEADY SHOWING THEIR DISSATISFACTION
WITH THE GOVERNMENT AND EXPRESSING THEIR SUPPORT FOR THE CURRENT
STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS. THE CENSORSHIP DECREE, WHICH HAS LITTLE
IMMEDIATE EFFECT ON THE POPULATION AT LARGE, WILL HAVE IS GREATEST
IMPACT ON INTELLECTUALS AND CAN ONLY EXACERBATE THEIR ILL FEELINGS
TOWARD THE CURRENT REGIME. IT WILL PROBABLY PROVOKE MORE PUBLIC
PROTEST, MOST LIKELY IN THE FORM OF STILL OTHER
MANIFESTOES AND PETITIONS. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CENSORSHIP, PUBLICATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 03-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BRASIL04516
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
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Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770198-0752
Format: TEL
From: BRASILIA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770695/aaaadeyl.tel
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TAGS: PGOV, PINS, SOPN, BR
To: STATE
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vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/6071c785-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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